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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Support)

SUBJECT: Agency Manpower Study

With reference to the memorandum of 17 November 1955 concerning Agency manpower, the three questions set forth therein are considered in order.

a. If a ten per cent reduction were required by the Director, it would mean a reduction of two positions in the Office of the General Counsel. Under current circumstances this would not, in my estimation, have a harmful effect. This Office like much of the DD/S component is purely a service staff and the service it renders is advice on legal matters. It has no self-generated requirements. Consequently, the workload at any one time is unpredictable, particularly as it is not so much the number of problems as the difficulty and complexity that control. If the Office were understaffed, the main effect would be delay, but probably there would be some lowering of the quality of the work produced due to pressure in research and consultation. At present this Office appears to be staffed to meet any foreseeable requirements, and reduction of one or even two lawyers would not materially impair the Office's ability to perform its function adequately if the workload remains constant at its present average. It would impair its ability to meet emergencies or peak workloads that we have experienced in the past. My feeling is that the lawyers are currently gainfully employed on necessary work and I do not seek a reduction, but if one or even two lawyers were to leave the staff I would not in all probability recruit against the positions vacated until I had given a fair try to working with the reduced staff. If two lawyers were to go this would probably mean an automatic reduction of one clerical position. I do not see how any reductions could be effected by trying to have legal work done by contract. We do use outside lawyers a considerable amount, but this is based on security and is a comparatively inefficient means of rendering the necessary legal advice. Certainly for the main burden of our legal advice to the Agency the work must be performed by the legal staff itself.

b. The Office of the General Counsel has sole responsibility for advice on all legal matters arising out of the Agency's activities.

No other organizational unit performs this function in whole or in part. Of course, the Department of Justice is available for legal advice to all departments and agencies and at one time no agency was authorized to employ its own counsel. However, experience showed that this attempt to centralize legal problems did not meet the needs of the agencies and in all cases now departments and agencies have their own legal staffs. Particularly is this true of the Central Intelligence Agency as its problems are in a majority of cases different from those facing the Government as a whole. Furthermore, the fact that almost all the information involved is classified would, in effect, prohibit reference to an outside agency. This Office does restrict itself, however, to Agency problems and refers to the Department of Justice or the Comptroller General such matters as can be handled under the normal procedures of Government. We believe, therefore, that we have reached a proper balance and that no additional portions of the Agency's legal problems can be handled outside this Office.

c. This is answered in a. above. The contemplation is that this Office should reduce slightly in size over the coming year if no unexpected circumstances are encountered.

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LAWRENCE R. HOUSTON  
General Counsel

cc: Director of Communications